



ACHIEVING Success

High Schools East and West have already achieved great success and received numerous accolades in the areas of academics, athletics and the arts during the 2015-2016 school year.

The College Board has recognized more than 400 current and recently graduated Smithtown students as Advanced Placement Scholars. The AP awards, which are divided into several categories, were bestowed upon the students based on their exceptional achievement on the national exams.

A total of 152 Smithtown students qualified for the AP Scholar Award; an additional 81 students received the AP Scholar with Honor Award; while 148 students qualified for the AP Scholar with Distinction Award. In addition, 27 Class of 2015 graduates

received the highest designation of National AP Scholar.

High School East seniors Emily McDermott and Thomas Silvester and High School West senior Ryan Scheinberg have been named semifinalists in the 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program. They will have the opportunity to compete with 16,000 other semifinalists for some 7,400 National Merit scholarships to be offered next spring. Emily, Thomas and Ryan were among the 1.5 million juniors who entered the 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2014 PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

District students are also earning recognition for their exceptional musical abilities. High School West piccolo player Melissa Callegari



**District Seeks
Community
Feedback**

See Page 5 for Details

was selected for inclusion in the National Association for Music Education's All-National Honor Ensembles. She recently performed along with the nation's most elite student-musicians at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee.

A total of 49 HSE and HSW student-musicians will represent the district at prestigious musical festivals this fall and winter. Fifteen HSE and HSW students have been selected for All-State honors as a result of their superior scores at the New York State School Music Association solo festival and teacher recommendations. All-State student ensembles will perform at the 2015 NYSSMA Winter Conference.

Thirty-three students from HSE and HSW were named NYSCAME/SCMEA All-County musicians. Selection to this organization is one of the most prestigious honors in Suffolk County for a student-musician. Students will perform in the NYSCAME/SCMEA All-County Concert.

The district's athletes are not only shining on the sports fields, but in the classrooms as well. Both high schools were recognized as Scholar/Athlete Schools of Distinction for the 2014-2015 school year by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association. Teams can earn School of Distinction status by having 100 percent of their varsity teams earn an academic GPA of 90 percent or above. A total of 53 varsity teams in the district qualified as Scholar/Athlete teams during the 2014-2015 year.

Rounding out the accolades, HSE and Tackan Elementary School have been designated Reward Schools by the New York State Education Department. The State Education Department bestows these awards to schools annually based on high student performance on state assessments, graduation rates and overall academic progress.



A Message from Your *Superintendent*

Dear Residents,



Following a summer that seemed to go by very quickly, it is difficult to believe how the months of September and October have just as quickly come and gone. It was quite a successful summer in Smithtown, as we hired a number of new staff members and opened our facilities to six different summer programs. These programs engaged our students in continuous learning, focused on character development and prepared our students to return to school ready and excited to learn.

Much has also been accomplished within our district in these past two months. As you can see from page 1 of The Digest, our high school students have given us much to be proud of as they continue to build upon the successes of the previous classes. Our students continue to impress me with their achievements, and I look forward to even more successes as the year progresses.

As part of our district's goal to develop a well-rounded educational program while remaining fiscally responsible to our taxpayers, the Board and administration have adopted goals for the 2015-16 school year. As we move forward, we are seeking feedback from our community. This feedback will assist us as we create our vision for the future. Additionally, to assist in our planning purposes, we are requesting members of our community fill out a simple census survey. Both the goals and census surveys may be found under the "District" tab of our website.

To remain updated on what is happening in our schools, be sure to visit the district's newly redesigned website at www.smithtown.k12.ny.us.

Sincerely,

James J. Grossane, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

WELCOME TO THE *Wellness Corner*



Health and wellness efforts abound in Smithtown. From elementary sports and wellness and yoga clubs to the growing school gardens movement, Smithtown's focus on student and community wellness is building ever-greater momentum.

In October, the district participated in the Big Apple Crunch, a fun, interactive, statewide celebration of Food Day. Hundreds of students around the district celebrated by biting into an apple at school on Oct. 23.

Also this fall, the elementary school cafeterias tested out new vanilla yogurt and fresh strawberry parfaits as a snack. Elementary "Tray Day" resumed in September; students who find a sticker on their lunch tray receive a small prize. Check out pictures of the parfaits and other offerings from the school nutrition program on the Web or Twitter: @scsd_nutrition.

Over the summer, middle school students attending our summer C.A.M.P. program (see last page) nurtured a prosperous vegetable garden on the Accomsett Middle School campus. After planting, weeding, watering, composting and studying agriculture for six weeks, they used the food they had grown to prepare a delicious and healthy zucchini pasta with fresh basil and tomato sauce.

Exciting news from the high school level: After being nominated by alumna Kayla Laurello (HSE Class of 2015), English teacher Jim Kelly was selected to attend a professional development event at the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture this fall, sponsored by Whole Foods Market. Stone Barns is renowned for education, outreach, support for young farmers and the world-class restaurant Blue Hill, which uses food grown at Stone Barns in its kitchen.

Mr. Kelly and 29 other educators walked the Pocantico Hills farm, ate biodynamically grown produce, cooked, and discussed ways to provide the best food experiences for students. Among the trip's many lessons, Mr. Kelly learned how gardens foster community and generosity, how knowing your farmer supports best food production practices, and how, when faced with obstacles, your best bet is not to focus on them, but to "say yes, then find the next magical thing."

The district's Wellness Committee meets monthly to plan wellness events, improve student awareness about the effect of nutrition on the mind and body, and promote healthy choices. Members include current and former students, teachers, parents and administrators. Follow them on Twitter for news and tips! @scsd_wellness.

New Faces TO THE District



Kristen Andriaccio joins the district as the administrator for staff development and grants. She oversees the coordination, implementation and evaluation of all districtwide staff development, as well as the application and administration of federal title grants. In addition, Mrs. Andriaccio performs related tasks within the Curriculum Office. She joins Smithtown after serving as an instructional coordinator in the

Northport School District. Mrs. Andriaccio holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Dowling College, a Master of Science in Literacy from LIU Post, and an Advanced Graduate Certificate in Educational Leadership from Stony Brook University.



Linda Taylor is serving as the interim elementary principal at Tackan Elementary School. She previously served as Comsewogue School District's assistant superintendent for student management services. Prior to that, she was an elementary principal in the Eastport and Comsewogue school districts. She has also held several interim positions in Smithtown over the last 10 years, including elementary

principal at Mount Pleasant and Tackan, administrator for grants and human resources, and assistant principal at Accomsett MS. Mrs. Taylor holds a Bachelor of Science from Syracuse University, a Master of Library Science from LIU Post and a professional diploma in education administration from Hofstra University.



Dr. Allyn Leeds is the acting assistant superintendent for pupil personnel services. Dr. Leeds has been the principal at Tackan Elementary School since November 2005. Prior to that, she served as the assistant superintendent for instruction/principal in the East Moriches School District from 1997-2005. Dr. Leeds holds a Bachelor of Science from East Stroudsburg University, a Master of Science from Stony Brook University, a

Doctorate in Education Leadership from St. John's University and a professional diploma in school district administration from Dowling College.

In addition to the new administrators welcomed, the district also brought into the Smithtown family the following teachers:

- Rachelle Amendola, *Math, HSE/GHMS*
- Erica Axelrod, *Deaf Education, District*
- Laura Brienza, *FACS, GHMS/HSE*
- Jessica Brunet, *Special Education, HSW/AMS*
- Danielle DeMola, *School Psychologist, HSW*
- Jaclyn Fettinger, *FACS, AMS/GHMS*
- Ashleigh Giangrasso, *ESL, TEL/SEL*
- Jaclyn Lazio, *Special Education, NMS*
- Blake Malizia, *Business, HSW/HSE*
- Stephanie McKinney, *Social Worker, HSW*
- Maria Pasqualo, *Social Studies, HSW/AMS*
- Krystyna Reckner, *Social Worker, TEL/HSW*
- Nicole Stech, *ESL, HSW/GHMS*
- Katharine Vaughan, *Speech, AEL/DEL*



Christine LoFrese has been named the district's career and technical education chairperson, overseeing the Business, Family and Consumer Science, and Technology departments. Previously, she was a teacher in the business department at Smithtown High School for 17 years. A graduate of HSE, Mrs. LoFrese received a Bachelor of Arts in SSI and English, as well as a professional diploma in educational administration from Stony Brook University, and a Master of Science in accounting from LIU Post.



Lisa Carelli-Lang serves as an administrator for special education. Her responsibilities include working with special education 9-12, out-of-district students and private/parochial placed students. Mrs. Carelli-Lang was previously employed with the Levittown School District as director of special education. She has a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Education from Buffalo State College. She is certified in art education, elementary education and special education.

Additionally, Mrs. Carelli-Lang has a professional diploma from LIU Post and is certified as a school administrator and supervisor as well as school district administrator.

Creating the Framework for Tomorrow

Give Us Your Feedback Online!

The Smithtown Central School District is dedicated to educating students to develop desired moral, ethical, and cultural values, to stimulate and expand a continual learning process and to cultivate an understanding and appreciation of the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, which will enable them to function effectively as independent individuals in a democratic society.

Prior to the start of this school year, the Board of Education and administration conducted an analysis of the state of the district and, based upon their findings, developed goals for the upcoming school year. To that end, the Board, in conjunction with Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Grossane, adopted three overarching goals for the 2015-16 school year. While these topics are broad, the Board has established a set of priority goals for each category, which can be viewed on the district's website under "District - Aims and Objectives."

These goals will provide a framework for the Board and members of administration to work toward throughout the school year. To remain informed on these goals and the district's progress toward completing them, residents are invited to attend the district's Board of Education meetings, review upcoming editions of the Digest and visit the website, www.smithtown.k12.ny.us.

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Goal 1

To continually develop and foster student learning opportunities through student-centered, creative instructional strategies and curriculum development, formative assessments, authentic assessments and technology integration.

Goal 2

To continually promote a learning environment that fosters respect, ethical behavior and responsible citizenship.

Goal 3

To analyze, create and implement strategic financial plans to optimize budgetary efficiencies that preserve or increase student programming while remaining financially responsible to the community.

Reaching Out to the Community

As partners in education, the Board and administration are soliciting feedback from community residents regarding a number of items in relation to the district. The district is inviting residents to participate in two short surveys with the goal of building its vision for 2015-16 and beyond, as well as to assist in planning for the future.

"As our district moves toward the future, the Board and administration are constantly adapting their goals to facilitate even higher levels of achievement for our students and staff," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Grossane.

In addition to gathering feedback from the two surveys, the district is offering a Gold Card to local Smithtown senior citizens aged 62 or over. The Gold Card gives our senior residents access to select shows put on by our performing groups.

The goals survey, census survey and Gold Card registration can be accessed under the "District - Surveys" tab on the district website, www.smithtown.k12.ny.us.

The page can also be found directly by using your smartphone to scan the QR code to the right.



NEW INITIATIVES

SMART SCHOOLS TECH

As the district continues to implement and expand the integration of the most current instructional technology, as outlined in its goals for this school year, the Smart Schools Bond funding is at the forefront of those discussions.

Smithtown is eligible for \$3.9 million in New York State bond funds, which will be used to make technological improvements over the next several years. The district is currently in the application and planning phase of this process.

“We want to have a plan that is financially responsible and provides technology upgrades over a long period

of time,” said John Nolan, director of information and technology services. “We do not want to purchase a large wave of technology that may become obsolete in five years. We are taking a long-term approach by spreading the funds, and the new technology that can be purchased with those funds, over a longer period of time.”

The district’s preliminary goals for using the Smart Schools Bond funding include security upgrades, network infrastructure (wireless, bandwidth, etc.), and possible Smart Board additions and replacements.

Once the application phase is complete, the district can plan for select technological upgrades in the 2016-17 budget.

INCREASED PROGRAM OFFERINGS

For the 2015-16 school year, the district launched new course offerings and increased access to elective courses. More students were able to enroll in courses such as Robotics, Criminal Justice, and Writing for College, resulting in fewer students in study halls. The newly offered Studio in Digital Media Arts class provides students a foundational course in art that allows them to concentrate in digital media studies.

At the grade school level, new curricular resources include Raz-Kids, Reading A-Z and Writing A-Z. Raz-Kids is an expansive library for leveled readers with texts for students to work on in school or at home. This opens the opportunity for students to move from one reading level to the next as they take online quizzes, build fluency and demonstrate proficiency by moving to the next levels of the text. Professional development sessions and parent orientations were offered to introduce staff and parents to the program to help bridge the home-to-school connection.

Focusing ON THE Whole Child

One of the district’s main objectives for the 2015-2016 school year centers on social and emotional learning (SEL). It is the goal of the district to continually promote a learning environment that fosters respect, ethical behavior and responsible citizenship.

To that end, the district is rolling out new SEL initiatives that will help teachers connect better to students while educating the whole child. The district is offering year-long staff development that supports teachers’ social and emotional well-being. Research demonstrates that SEL and mindfulness practices support personal as well as academic growth, resiliency, stress

regulation, social relationships, emotional regulation, focus and well-being.

“This is a year-long program for 50 of our K-12 teachers,” said Jennifer Bradshaw, assistant superintendent for instruction. “They all volunteered for the training, which focuses on teacher well-being and bringing practices back to the classroom.”

The methods for instruction will include didactic, experiential and coaching approaches for teacher development. Teachers will participate in a series of full-day and 90-minute workshops. They will also receive coaching instruction to support professional goals while integrating those approaches into learning environments.

The content covers the practice and application of evidence-based mind/body and mindfulness-based strategies for whole-child development. Specific areas of child development include: affect and learning, strategies for developing student self- and emotional regulation, interpersonal relationship development, critical thinking, and self- and social awareness. This work will enable teachers to more fully partner with students to overcome obstacles and barriers in the classroom that impact academic growth.

The trainings will contain cutting-edge child development and neuroscience strategies to support and strengthen teachers’ understanding to help bridge theory and practice. Teachers will participate in self-care strategies for their own professional wellness to guard against burnout while also supporting and creating

a caring and compassionate learning environment.

The goal is to allow teachers to learn and implement practices that promote stress reduction and self-care, strengthen social relationships, and ultimately lead to increased student learning. The workshops consist of coaching and after-school training facilitated by Joshua Hendrickson, LMSW. They cover a multitude of topics that focus on the whole teacher and will ultimately be brought to the classroom and shared with colleagues.

“Our students bring a host of emotions and experiences with them to school each day. By nurturing the whole child, we help students develop the skills to take charge of their own well-being, whether academic, interpersonal, emotional or physical,” Ms. Bradshaw said.

SMITHTOWN PRIDE

Shines Bright

High Schools East and West recently celebrated their homecomings, letting their school pride shine throughout the community.

As part of the town's 350-year celebration, the members of West's band, clubs and athletic teams, along with the homecoming court nominees, paraded down Main Street prior to the game.

Following the parade, the varsity football team took to the field against Centereach High School. West scored early on, and the Bulls maintained a strong lead to capture a 48-28 victory. The halftime show included performances by the school's award-winning kickline and cheerleading teams. In addition, varsity football team captain Michael Alfano and recently recognized scholar-artist Gabriella Carucci were crowned homecoming king and queen.

The cold and rain didn't dampen the Bulls' spirit as East took on Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School in early October.

Members of East's cheerleading team, Whisperettes, DECA, robotics club, band, homecoming court and administration, along with Whisper the Bull, paraded down Lake Avenue and onto the track to greet fans in the grandstands.

With no points on the scoreboard for either team in the first half, Copiague and East both scored in the third quarter. With the score tied 8-8 at the end of the fourth quarter, the game went into overtime, but despite their best efforts, the HSE Bulls were defeated 14-8.

The East halftime show was led by the 16-time award-winning kickline team, the Whisperettes. Following their performance, the up-and-coming younger Whisperettes took the field to show off what they had learned at a recent clinic held by the varsity team. Kevin Keese and Victoria Joscelyn were crowned homecoming king and queen.



****ECRWSS****
SMITHTOWN POSTAL CARRIER

Summer Program Highlights

Six unique summer programs help to engage students in continuous learning, social-emotional development and interaction, as well as music and the arts. Below are some highlights of the district's summer happenings:

Student-musicians in grades 5-9 have the chance to hone their musical abilities during the summer months. Hosted by the Friends of Smithtown Music, students worked in small groups three mornings a week throughout July.

The middle school summer C.A.M.P. (Character, Academics, Mindset, Preparedness) program offers a project-based curriculum that focuses on creativity and talents. The program highlights include courses such as digital media, gardening, coding, research and miniature golf design. Social-emotional learning activities are woven into the curriculum, giving students the opportunity to negotiate relationships with each other and staff members.

"I cannot speak highly enough about the engagement I saw in our students led by our incredibly dedicated staff and interns," said C.A.M.P. program coordinator Joel Sidwell. "It was a joy to see the groups progress each day and to see kids who were genuinely happy to be spending many of their summer hours in our program."

Elizabeth Stein, assistant program coordinator for C.A.M.P., added,

"Students were able to connect with the emotional side of learning in ways that broke free from more traditional methods of teaching. We created daily activities with students that invited them to personally connect with their beliefs, feelings, ideas and questions in a way that had the power to launch deeper academic learning experiences. Each day was a new opportunity for learners to experience a process that connected with personal attitudes, decisions and actions."

The Summer Reading Program, for grades 1-8, helps to hone students' reading skills during the summer months. Attendees had the opportunity to take part in one of two daily sessions, four days a week, for four weeks. Under the supervision of Michelle McAndrew-Mitchell, assistant administrator of special education and special services, students spent 90-minute sessions reinforcing their skills in phonics, grammar, comprehension strategies and writing through direct and indirect reading instruction, shared reading, and independent reading and response experiences.

"This was great practice and promoted continued success in reading for our students," said Mrs. McAndrew-Mitchell.

Specialized instruction with the intent of preventing regression of academic and social skills is the core focus of the Extended School Year Program, a 30-day



special education program for students who have a 12-month Individualized Education Program.

With course offerings such as Clay for Kids, Smithtown Survivor, Mad Scientist, Kids Cuisine, Lego Block Party and Clowning Around with Magic, the SCOPE Summer Explorations program makes learning fun for its attendees. For elementary students entering grades 1-6, the program provides enriching ways to expand learning while also having fun.

Finally, the ESL summer program was offered to English Language Learners in grades 1-12 for three weeks. The objective of the program was to building reading, writing, listening and speaking skills by instructing students about oceans around the world, animals of the ocean and how weather impacts the oceans. Students had an opportunity to visit the Riverhead Aquarium, which was a wonderful culminating activity to the thematic unit.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY DIGEST

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